

Message Text

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TAGS: PINS, PINT, GR

SUBJECT: GOG POSTPONES PROSECUTION OF CYPRUS COUP INSTIGATORS

REFS: ATHENS 0358 AND 1073

1. SUMMARY. CARAMANLIS' ADMINISTRATION DECIDED TO DELAY PRE-TRIAL INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED PERPETRATORS OF CYPRUS COUP SINCE CYPRUS PROBLEMS "REQUIRE UNOBSTRUCTED HANDLING AND TO AVOID DISRUPTING GREECE'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS." MAJOR OPPOSITION LEADERS WERE BRIEFED IN ADVANCE AND ACCEPTED GOG'S DECISION. ATHENS NEWSPAPERS LINKED ANNOUNCEMENT WITH SECRETARY'S MEETING IN BRUSSELS WITH FONMIN BITSIOS WHICH GOG DENIED AS UNFOUNDED ADDING THAT "CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT DOES NOT ACCEPT TERMS OR PRESSURE FROM ANYONE." END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING CABINET MEETING MARCH 7, GREEK GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED THAT DECISION WAS TAKEN TO POSTPONE INITIATION OF PROSECUTION "FOR ACTS CONNECTED WITH THE TRAGIC EVENTS IN CYPRUS, 1974." GOVERNMENT STATEMENT POINTED OUT THAT NEED TO DEAL WITH PROBLEM OF CYPRUS IN UNOBSTRUCTED WAY AND TO AVOID DISTURBING GREECE'S INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DICTATED THIS

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DECISION. CABINET IMPLEMENTED DECISION BY ISSUING TWO ACTS:

ONE SUSPENDS PENAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST CYPRUS COUP
INSTIGATORS OF ABOUT 50 PERSONS, INCLUDING RETIRED MILITARY
OFFICERS BG IOANNIDES, MG PAPADAKIS, BG GEORGITSIS
AND OTHERS AND MOST OF MEMBERS EX-PRIMIN ANDROUTSOPOULOS
CABINET. THE OTHER DELAYS INVESTIGATIONS RESULTING
FROM LEGAL ACTION BY IOANNIDES' ATTORNEY AGAINST EX-CHIEF-OF-STAFF
OF HELLENIC ARMED FORCES GENERAL BONANOS AND SERVICE CHIEFS IN
JULY 1974 FOR FAILING TO EXECUTE ORDERS TO ATTACK TURKS AT
EVROS RIVER, DESERTING MILITARY POSITIONS IN FACE OF ENEMY,
TREASON, ETC. DURATION OF POSTPONEMENT IS NOT STATED IN
OFFICIAL RELEASE.

3. PRIOR ISSUING ITS STATEMENT, GOG (CARAMANLIS PERSONALLY
AND OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS) BRIEFED PRINCIPAL POLITICAL
OPPOSITION LEADERS WHICH BROUGHT FORTH QUALIFIED ENDORSEMENTS
OF THE DECISION. MAVROS IN CONCURRING WITH DECISION TO
POSTPONE ACTION WARNED AGAINST INDEFINITE POSTPONEMENT
WHILE PAPANDREOU TOLD NEWSMEN THAT GOVERNMENT BRIEFING
CONVINCED HIM OF NEED TO DELAY PROSECUTION. EDA
LEADER ILIOU LIKEWISE GAVE HIS APPROVAL. HARMONY WITH
TRADITIONAL POLITICAL OPPONENTS DID NOT EXTEND TO PRESS
WHERE SPECULATIVE STORIES APPEARED LINKING GOG ACTION TO
KISSINGER/BITSIOS CONVERSATION IN BRUSSELS. ATHINAIKI
RAN HEADLINE "DANGEROUS AMERICAN BLACKMAIL" AND ALONG WITH
KATHIMERINI TOOK LEAD IN ANALYZING POSTPONEMENT INTERMS
OF BRUSSELS TALKS AND FOREIGN (I.E., U.S.) PRESSURES.
PROVOKED BY THESE NEWS ARTICLES GOG ISSUED CRISP DENIAL
FOLLOWING DAY INDICATING DECISION WAS TAKEN BEFORE BRUSSELS
MEETING AND ADDING THAT "CARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT DOES NOT
ACCEPT EITHER TERMS OR PRESSURE FROM ANYONE AND HANDLES VARIOUS
PROBLEMS OF THE
COUNTRY IN LIGHT OF NATIONAL INTERESTS."

4. COMMENT: SPECULATION LINKING GOVERNMENT ACTION TO
POSTPONE PROSECUTION OF CYPRUS COUP INSTIGATORS TO
KISSINGER/BITSIOS MEETING WOULD PROBABLY NOT HAVE ARISEN HAD
GOVERNMENT NOT ANNOUNCED ITS DECISION ON EVE OF BRUSSELS
MEETING. BASIC MOTIVATION OF CARAMANLIS ADMINISTRATION NOT
TO REOPEN LAST SUMMER'S CYPRUS FILE AT THIS TIME, WHICH
WOULD INVOLVE LENGTHY INVESTIGATION INTO NATIONAL
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TRAGEDY IMPLICATING NUMEROUS TOP CIVILIAN AND MILITARY LEADERS THEN
IN OFFICE, APPARS TO HAVE EXCAPED ATTENTION OF PRESS.
PERHAPS MOST SIGNIFICANT ASPECT OF GOG ACTION WAS ITS SUCCESS
IN CONSULTING IN ADVANCE WITH OPPOSITION LEADERS AND GETTING
THEIR AGREEMENT, A NEARLY UNPRECEDENTED PROCEDURE WHOSE
BENEFICIAL RESULTS IN THIS INSTANCE MAY ENCOURAGE REPETITION.
AS REPORTED EARLIER (ATHENS 358 AND 1073) CYPRUS COUP
PROSECUTION IS DISTINCT FROM APRIL 21 COUP LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

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